

Tip of the



Prevention information from The Western Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies

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Native American Initiative

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The Native American Initiative was created by the American Indian Substance Abuse Prevention Advisory Group including individuals from various tribes across the United States. The Western CAPT became involved in the Initiative in September of 1999 when the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention asked the CAPT to co-sponsor the "Sacred Hoop Journey" and to initiate a search of Native American prevention programs from across the United States.

The "Sacred Hoop Journey," was sponsored by White Bison, Inc, which aspires to bring Indian Communities into sobriety and wellness, or "wellbriety," by encouraging recovery of ancient traditions, teachings and ceremonies. The Journey began on April 2, 2000 in Los Angeles, California and ended on July 9, 2000 in Washington DC. Ceremonies on each coast honored the Journey, which involved many people walking across the nation carrying a hoop of 100 eagle feathers blessed by the Elders from the four directions. The theme of the "Sacred Hoop Journey," was "the wiping of the tears." The walkers with the hoop carried a message of a "coming together" time for all people of all colors, a time of healing, hope, unity and forgiveness. Others

participated by attending workshops offered across the country or by providing meals, supplies and other forms of support to the walkers. Although the Journey is complete, the strong message is carried by all those involved or by those who witnessed daily journal entries and video clips on the White Bison web site.

The Western CAPT has also spent the past year collecting information from tribal people across the nation regarding their prevention efforts in the hope of sharing this information through the Internet. To date, the Western CAPT has located and contacted seventy-eight Native American prevention programs. Thirty-eight have provided information regarding their prevention efforts with twenty-eight demonstrating a level of effectiveness.

In September 2000, members of the American Indian Substance Abuse Prevention Advisory Group and other Native Americans, along with the Western CAPT and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, gathered in Reno, Nevada to review the program information gathered. The participating programs were reviewed and categorized:

- Culturally validated programs
- Culturally replicated programs
- Scientifically validated programs
- Scientifically replicated programs
- Innovative/emerging programs

The collection of Native American prevention programs will soon be added to the White Bison web site, www.whitebison.org, and the search for additional Native American prevention programs will continue. In addition, information will be gathered and shared on "lessons learned" in program development, implementation and evaluation.

The six regional CAPTs are funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. For more information on this Tip of the CAPT or other WestCAPT services, please visit our web site: www.unr.edu/westcapt or our best practices website: www.open.org/westcapt.

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